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## Foundation gives \$1 million in scholarships in 20 years

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Since its inception almost 20 years ago, the Reynaldo J. Carreon M.D. Foundation has awarded more than \$1 million in scholarships to more than 366 students to pursue higher education and improve their lives.

Many of these students are the first in their families to go to college and come from parents who struggle to make ends meet working in the agriculture fields and hospitality industry.

Luis Cardenas, a senior at La Quinta High School who resides in Indio, was one of 18 scholarship recipients honored last week during an awards banquet at the Miramonte Resort & Spa in Indian Wells.

He plans to attend the University of La Verne for premed.

"The Dr. Carreon Foundation has been helping students of Mexican ancestry accomplish their dreams of a higher education. (He) saw the need in the Mexican-American community and believed in the power of education," said foundation executive director Gloria Margarita.

Carreon, co-founder of Indio Community Hospital which is now John F. Kennedy Memorial Hospital, started the foundation prior to his death in 1991.

"We are seeing former scholarship recipients finish their education and come back to the Coachella Valley to make our community stronger as professionals," Margarita said.

The foundation has more than doubled the amount of its scholarships for the 2010-11 academic year in response to climbing tuition rates.

This year, \$67,000 in scholarships ranging from \$1,250 for students attending College of the Desert to \$5,000 for students attending four-year universities were awarded.

In addition to handing out scholarships to students,

Martin Martinez, former executive director of the foundation for 15 years, was honored at the awards banquet for his years of service.

He stepped down in October because of health issues.

Martinez, also considered an Indio pioneer, helped found the Coachella Valley Mexican American Chamber of Commerce.

"Martin Martinez helped carry out the foundation's mission of guiding our youth to become leaders of our future," Margarita said. "He maintained a close relationship with former recipients after they received the scholarship and often gave students that extra push they needed while in college."

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**Luis Cardenas** of La Quinta High School shakes hands with **Martin Martinez**, the former executive director for the Reynaldo J. Carreon M.D. Foundation. Cardenas, 18, received a scholarship from the foundation on May 21. (Mariecar Mendoz, The Indio Sun)



The Reynaldo J. Carreon M.D. Foundation awarded \$67,000 in scholarships to 18 Coachella Valley high school students during last week's awards banquet. (Mariecar Mendoza the Indio sun)

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